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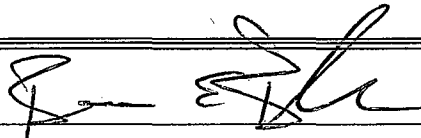
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Roles and missions for ROK and U.S. Combined Marine Corps Forces in a New era

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Executive Summary

Title: Roles and missions for ROK and U.S. Combined Marine Corps Forces in a New era.

Author: Major Juhyeong Um, Republic of Korea Marine Corps

Thesis: In the Korean peninsula, the period after 2000 is very active and ever-changing for the ROK and U.S. Alliance. Changes will be generated for the future in the aspect of not only the security environment of the Korean Peninsula but also situations for the ROK and U.S. Alliance. So, this is the time we need to explore new roles and missions of the ROK and U.S. Combined Marine Forces for a new era.

Discussion: The ROK and U.S. Combined Marine Forces should prepare together for future roles and missions under the global security environment which is changing significantly. The ROK and U.S. alliance has changed in the areas of military, economy and diplomacy in recent years and that is not easy to disregard its importance to both countries. The ROK and U.S. military alliance can be refined in several ways. Under the ROK and U.S. military alliances, the ROK and U.S. Marine Corps Combined Forces roles are important currently and will be in the future. In the future, the ROK and U.S. Combined Marine Forces should maintain the capabilities to support peace on the Korean Peninsula and provide vanguard power to help the rapid commitment of the U.S. troops. The ROK and U.S. Marine Corps Combined forces have to be employed as a ready-force to confront any potential conflict in Northeast Asia. The ROK and U.S. Combined Marine Forces play a role as a containing force against a rising China and other regional threats that may arise. In the preparations for the future era, the ROK Marine Corps needs to determine the optimal force structure and enhance the individual capabilities and doctrine to support the "Multi-dimensional Maneuver Operations" doctrine as a Basic Combat Concept for the future ROK Marine Corps's "Marine Air and Ground Task Forces".

Conclusion: The ROK Marine Corps has to conduct important roles in the future. For that, the ROK Marine Corps has to coordinate with the U.S. Marine Corps very closely through operational and educational cooperation. The ROK Marine Corps needs to develop every aspect of its warfighting strength in order to complement the capabilities of the U.S. Marine Corps.

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THE OPINIONS AND CONCLUSIONS EXPRESSED HEREIN ARE THOSE OF THE INDIVIDUAL STUDENT AUTHOR AND DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT THE VIEWS OF EITHER THE MARINE CORPS COMMAND AND STAFF COLLEGE OR ANY OTHER GOVERNMENTAL AGENCY. REFERENCES TO THIS STUDY SHOULD INCLUDE THE FOREGOING STATEMENT.

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Preface

I had started to think about my Masters of Military Studies paper before the Command & Staff College began. I thought that the thesis should have some connections with U.S. & ROK relationships and military agendas. Finally, I decided that I was going to write about “*New roles and missions for the ROK and U.S. Combined Marine Corps Forces in the New era.*”

My paper gives some ideas that are focused on the relationship between ROK and U.S. and roles & missions of the ROK and U.S. Combined Marine Corps Forces in the new era. It is understood that currently ROK and U.S. relationship has challenges in the aspects of diplomacy and military. To enhance and improve this situation, we have to understand what the problem is and find some solutions for the future. I would like to find solutions from the military aspect, especially for the ROK and U.S. Combined Marine Corps Forces.

INTRODUCTION

The global security environment of today is being changed very dramatically, more complicated, and uncertainly than previous time of the world. According to the selected coordination and controlled diplomacy which are leaded by the United States of America, the possibility of large scale war is declined. But the importance of the coordinated confrontation of international society is gradually increased.

*Commandant of ROKMC, LtGen Lee, SangRo
The Address of the 9th International Symposium
for the ROKMC Development. July 15, 2002*

Based upon the address of the Commandant of the ROK Marine Corps, we are provided a clear understanding what is happening in international geo-politics today in Northeast Asia and on the Korean Peninsula in particular. The present period in the 21st century is very active and ever-changing for the ROK and U.S. Alliance. These changes will influence the future in the aspect of not only the security environment of the Korean Peninsula, but also the broader relationship of the ROK and U.S..

There are numerous reasons why the relationship of the ROK and U.S. Alliance and the circumstance of security have changed on the Korean Peninsula. Politically, the Korean governments since Kim Dae-Jung's had attitudes different from the previous governments toward the United States. In the aspect of policy making and decision processes, the previous governments were very unique. Fundamentally, these governments philosophy were to remain isolated from the international society, without any cooperation with the international community. They also thought it was the time that Korea could do everything without any cooperation, even in defense and security requirements. In the military aspect, the ROK and U.S. had started to review the Wartime Operational Control Transfer. This is also one of the serious reasons to support the ROK and U.S. Alliance. Economically, Korea desired closer coordination with the U.S. on an equal level, so the Free Trade Agreements between the ROK and U.S. progressed and provided another example of how the ROK and U.S. relationship has changed recently.

On the Korean peninsula, the changes will be generated for the future in the aspect of not only the security environment of the Korean Peninsula but also the broader relationship between the ROK and U.S.. This is the time we need to find out what the new missions, functions, roles and responsibilities of the ROK and U.S. Combined Marine Forces are for the new era.

Framework of Analysis

This paper does not attempt to identify all of the problems of the ROK and U.S. Alliance, but will attempt to determine where we are going today and what we need to do for the next era, especially in the aspect of the ROK and U.S. Marine Corps in Northeast Asia and on the Korean Peninsula.

I would like to present the proposed changes to the strategic and security environment first, and comment a little about the change of the ROK and U.S. Alliance. From these perspectives, I will present what is going to be the role of the ROK and U.S. Combined Marine Forces in adapting themselves to the new era. And finally, I will present what the ROK Marine Corps requirements are to prepare to do that.

For this research, books and articles which are written about Korea will be major sources, and also many military documents. According to the deficiency of the language ability, several books, articles, and papers written in Korean are also good resources for this research.

CHANGE OF SECURITY ENVIRONMENT

After 9/11, the global security environment changed. The asymmetric uncertainty has increased with the pursuit of close cooperation in global society. Due to rapid globalization, the pattern of conflict has changed from a large scale to small scale conflict. Nuclear weapons have an effect on the global security. And, the continued possession of thousands of nuclear weapons by a small number of countries and the potential proliferation and use of these weapons are

fundamentally international problems that require international solutions. So, the perfect peace of the global society should not be seen as a realistic objective in the near future.

The situation of Northeast Asia has considerable influence upon the global security change and there are two far different concerns that must be considered regarding the current situation. The major issue which raises tremendous concerns is the nuclear problem. The North Korea nuclear issue and the Taiwan issue remain unresolved, and these are two serious issues, if not properly handled, that could result in regional instability. The Republic of Korea and even Japan are exhibiting strong desires to explore more self-reliant foreign policies, while the influence of the "peaceful rise" of China is increasingly being felt. On the other hand, the U.S. has never veiled its worries about the alleged intention of China to recover its traditional central role in the region.¹ This issue has the potential to destabilize not only Northeast Asia but also much of the Global Community.

Another issue which could be viewed as a positive prospect is the signs of potential increased regional cooperation between three major countries in Northeast Asia, China, Japan and South Korea. Chinese spokesman Qin said "The leaders of China, Japan and South Korea today agreed to push for the establishment of a peace mechanism in East Asia," without elaborating what a "peace mechanism" might involve, the three leaders agreed to meet on a regular basis to discuss security issues in East Asia² Nobody can predict the future situation of Northeast Asia, therefore, it is inferred that it is too ambiguous to say the situation is good or bad.

Over all, the present state of global and Northeast Asian security environments should have an effect on the security situation on the Korean Peninsula. The policy of reconciliation, coordinated by South Korea, and the open/reform policy by North Korea will be seen on the Korean Peninsula. The unexpected situation would be predicted on the relationship between the

two Koreas, but the two Koreas will probably work together for the peaceful coexistence and unification of the Korean Peninsula. Nevertheless, the dangerous scenarios, and potential for a North Korean collapse, due to North Korea's economic and social instability, should be anticipated and prepared for.³

CHANGE IN THE ROK and U.S. ALLIANCE

The ROK and U.S. alliance has been in a consistent state of change since the late 1990s. Those changes have occurred in numerous aspects between the two countries, for instance, in the military, the economy and the diplomatic relationships. As South Korea became economically and militarily stronger and developed democratic institutions, the country was in a position to assume greater responsibilities in its partnership with the United States.

Diplomacy

There were many diplomatic differences between the ROK and U.S. governments since the late 1990s. We can see many differences in the perception of the threat posed by North Korea. The efforts of the U.S. administration to stop nuclear proliferation by North Korea, and South Korea's attempts to develop a policy of engagement towards the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, resulted in friction between the two allies. The differences were amplified by efforts of the Rho Moo Hyun government to pursue a foreign policy that was less dependent upon the United States.⁴ It is easy to understand that these problems come from South Korea's particular relationship with North Korea, but we can say carefully that these differences are derived from the perspectives of two foreign policies and presidential administrations. The changes in the diplomacy between the two countries have influenced the military and economic relationship as well.

Military

The United States and the Republic of Korea fought a war side by side, even before formally establishing a military alliance. Both countries were the main contributors to the United Nations Command during the Korea War (1950-53) and suffered the heaviest losses.⁵ This tremendous military alliance, the most enduring in the world, has also encountered some huge changes. First of all, the change of the military alliance is based on the U.S. strategic changes. The United States has shifted its strategic focus to the War on Terror and adopted "strategic flexibility" as a military principle. The United States is restructuring and redeploying its forces in East Asia. As part of its military strategy, the U.S. is reducing, restructuring and relocating the U.S. forces in Korea and agreed to transfer wartime operational control to Korea.⁶ It is difficult to say that these changes are not the result of all the changes in the ROK and U.S. alliance, but these are certainly major contributing factors that produced change within the ROK and U.S. alliance, especially, the wartime operational control transfer which is a dramatic event in the history of the ROK and U.S. alliance.

We can find other reasons for change inside the Republic of Korea military. Under the ROK and U.S. military alliance, the Republic of Korea military enhanced its readiness through equipment fielding and training in accordance with modern doctrine. The ROK army has fielded 13 modernized armor brigades since 1998, 11 field artillery battalions, 2 multiple launch rocket system battalions, and an extremely capable special operations force. The Marine Corps is highly trained, and the Navy is emerging as a bluewater force, having launched its first LPX- class ship in 2005, a vessel similar to a light aircraft carrier and the largest ship owned by a regional power in Northeast Asia. In 2007, the Navy also commissioned its first Aegis destroyer. Finally, the Air

Force is modernizing with the inclusion of F-15K fighters and precision-guided munitions to enhance deep strike and core facility protection capabilities.⁷

Economic

South Korea's remarkable economic development since 1960, due to reducing Seoul's dependence on the United States, has provided the background for a re-examination of its traditional patron-client relationship with Washington D.C. and has expanded the range of choices for broader foreign policy decisions. And, South Korea is now the world's twelfth-largest economy and holds the fourth-largest foreign reserves. It is the seventh-largest U.S. trading partner, ahead of such European countries as France and Italy, enabling it to deal with the United States on more equitable terms.

At the same time, the relative importance of the United States to South Korea has been steadily declining with the rise of China, at least in economic terms. China has made impressive economic and geopolitical gains with South Korea since their normalization of relations in 1992. Before normalization, China bought only 1.4 percent of South Korea's exports in 1991 while the United States bought 25.8 percent. By 2003, however, China's share of South Korea's exports had increased to 18.1 percent while the U.S. share had declined to 17.7 percent. Although the United States remains one of South Korea's most important trade and business partners, China has grown to be a relative important trade and business partner, and the growth in China's relative importance is unmistakable. To benefit from China's spectacular economic growth and create a geopolitical environment conducive to peace and security in Northeast Asia, South Korea wants to maintain a close relationship with China.⁸

Economic situations between the ROK and U.S. mentioned above, led the two countries to sign the ROK and U.S. FTA (Free Trade Agreement). The objective of the FTA between two countries was expected to enhance overall bilateral relations including security.⁹

WHY THE ROK and U.S. ALLIANCE IS NEEDED?

The existence of the ROK and U.S. alliance is taken as a matter of necessity for the progress of the Republic of Korea and the future of the United States. Even if there are some delicate frictions between the ROK and the U.S. today, it is not easy to disregard the ROK and U.S. alliance and its importance to both countries. There are important reasons why the ROK and U.S. alliance is essential for the ROK and the U.S.

First of all, we have to consider the geopolitical situation of the Korean peninsula. The Korean Peninsula had been defined as a buffer state in the international political aspect, a supply base and advanced base in the military aspect, and a U.S. Northeast strategic defense position to impede potential progress of Soviet expansion in the period of the Cold War.¹⁰ Because of the importance of this position, many countries have paid attention to the change of the ROK and U.S. alliance. We must continue the ROK and U.S. alliance systems to sustain and keep our geopolitical importance from being threatened by powerful countries around the Korean Peninsula.

Secondly, we also consider the ROK and U.S. alliance as a core element to containing a rising China in the Northeast Asia region. In recent years, China has risen into a regional power both militarily and economically. A comparison of Chinese defense spending over time leaves no doubt that Chinese military spending is on the rise. Annual average growth rates of over 14% are certainly high in international comparison yet appear to be sustained by almost equally high GDP growth rates.¹¹

For this reason the U.S. considers China as a threatening future competitor not only in Asia but also in the area of international society. For this reason, Korea and the U.S. should maintain and strengthen their alliance both militarily and economically.

Thirdly, we must consider limiting the U.S.-Japan military alliance. Definitely, Japan has played an important and decisive role in Northeast Asia with the United States recently. After 9/11, the United States shifted its focus to the continental U.S. and the Middle-East, so the United States has chosen Japan as a partner who can cover the absence of the United States in Northeast Asia. Historically, Japan formed a major alliance with the United States after World War II, but the U.S. and Japan military alliance is not enough to cover the U.S.'s insufficiency. The combat strength of the U.S. and Japan alliance is too enough to fulfill the U.S.'s expectations. But there is a problem; most nations in Asia do not desire that Japan rearm for numerous reasons. It is easy to understand why most nations do not have positive feelings toward Japan and why Japan should not be a leader in the Northeast Asia region. The ROK and U.S. alliance should be maintained to continue its influence and to secure the strategic objectives of the U.S. in Northeast Asia.

THE ROLE OF THE ROK and U.S. MARINE CORPS

Under the assumption of the continuous and more rigid ROK and U.S. alliance, a military alliance can be described in several ways. First of all, the responsibility of the Republic of Korea defense will be moved to the Republic of Korea with support from the U.S. in the near future. Now this coordination is in progress between the ROK and the U.S. and the initial date of April 17, 2012 was established as the time to transfer the Wartime Operation Control. But the date is now flexible due to the new president of Korea. Second, the ROK and U.S. military alliance will be moved to the Northeast Asia regional security alliance after the threat from North Korea is

eliminated. And the ROK and the U.S. will be key in the role in being the regional security alliance and will play a role as a stabilizer in the Northeast Asia region. Under these conditions the ROK and the U.S. Marine Corps Combined Forces will be one of the key elements in Northeast Asia and the Korean Peninsula. From now on, the roles of the ROK and the U.S. Marine Corps Combined Forces need to be considered for the future.

Current roles in Northeast Asia and Korea

The U.S. Marine Corps has an important role from the first phase of the war in the Korea Theater. In a very short period of warning, the U.S. Marine Corps will deploy 75% of their total combat strength, and they will execute missions like Noncombatant Evacuation Operation, and Flexible Deterrence Option. Afterwards, the Marines from both countries activate the Combined Marine Forces Command and conduct combat operations on the Korean Peninsula. The Combined Marine Forces Command plays a critical role in the defense of South Korea, and throughout the entire war, Combined Marine Forces Command contributes to the victory of the Combined Forces Command.

The ROK and the U.S. Combined Marine Forces Command has a strategic role in maintaining Armistice conditions on the Korean Peninsula. Under threat from North Korea, we have to use our forces to North Korea and defend South Korea if deterrence fails. For this reason, several combined amphibious exercises are conducted annually by the ROK and the U.S. Combined Marine Forces and it has a meaningful role in the Korean Peninsula. During Armistice we can demonstrate our combined ability to North Korea and deter them from considering the conduct of any aggressive attitude against South Korea territory. And, during hostilities, CMFC would be commanded by the MARFORPAC Commander (COMMARFORPAC), who would deploy to Korea with his staff. Combined Marine Forces Command's forces of about 100,000

ROK and U.S. personnel would play a significant role in the defense of the Republic of Korea as part of the United Nations Command/Combined Forces Command.¹²

Outside of the Korean Peninsula, we do not currently participate in meaningful operations and exercises by Combined Marine Forces. But we can look to some of the historical events the ROK and U.S. Combined Marine Forces conducted during the Korean War and Vietnam War. The ROK and U.S. Marine Corps conducted Inchon Landing Operations and the Inchon-Seoul Campaign as a combined force even though the ROK Marine Corps did not have enough combat power and was given help through equipment and education from the U.S. Marine Corps. These facts show that we have the potential ability to conduct and achieve any missions in Northeast Asia even though we have not conducted any training or exercises off the Korean Peninsula.

Future Roles of ROK and U.S. Combined Marine Forces

Now, we need to think about what roles and portions the ROK and U.S. Combined Marine Forces will have in the future. There should be thought of circumstances that may result in change from this time, but fundamentally, the ROK and U.S. Combined Marine Forces will be used for strategic purposes with peaceful results.

First, the ROK and U.S. Combined Marine Forces should maintain their combat power to support peace around the coastal area of the Korean Peninsula and serve as a vanguard force to help the rapid commitment of the U.S. troops until North Korea's threat has been eliminated.¹³ Nobody can predict what the ROK and U.S. Military alliance will be in the future. No matter what kind of structures are made for the next the ROK and U.S. military alliance, there should be U.S. forces deployed to the Korean Peninsula as a supporting forces. The roles that the U.S. Marine Forces possess to deter North Korea's threat should be continued for the near future, and this is the most important role on the Korean Peninsula because the early and rapid deployment

is very important for the execution of a short war on the Korean Peninsula.

Second, the ROK and U.S. Combined Marine Forces need to be employed as a ready-force to confront a critical conflict in Northeast Asia. At this point, the United States Forces are only focused on the War on Terrorism in the Middle-East, but the Asia region is no longer the region of calm for terrorism. We know that North Korea already conducted terrorism as a strategic purpose to force South Korea, for example, 121 insurgency operations by the North Korea Special Forces, bombed Korean Air Lines, and they are connected with international terrorist groups for providing weapons. Also, terrorism is progressing in China and Indonesia: the September 9, 2000, car-bombing detonated by the terrorists in the Urumuchi self-governing province in China, and a Bali nightclub bombing also provide examples of terrorism in Asia.¹⁴ To counter against these threats in Asia, Korea should be considered as a strategic location due to its geographical position, and the ROK and U.S. Combined Marine Ready Group is going to be an optimum choice for the future threat.

To support the role of ready-force in Northeast Asia, I would like to propose the deployment of the ROK and U.S. Combined Quick Reaction Unit. This CQRU is composed of two battalion sized ground forces which are provided by both Marine Corps with Combined Navy Amphibious Prepositioned Ships. This unit will prepare for every possible conflict and threats that may arise around the Asia region, and remain forward deployed permanently on the Korean peninsula. The battalion that is provided by the ROK Marine Corps will be designated as a Combat Ready Battalion at regular periods and train on specific mission-centered tasks for the combined execution with the U.S. Marine Corps. And, the U.S. Marines will designate a battalion sized unit as a ready force and deploy them to Korea for training with a designated ROK Marine Corps Battalion and be ready to execute their given mission. The U.S. Marine Corps Battalion will train

at the ROK training facility and stay at the Marine Corps Camp Mu-Juk, Korea which will become a permanent base for the Marine Corps by 2011 after more than two decades of serving as a camp for Marines deployed to South Korea for training.¹⁵ Their ground forces and major equipment will be deployed rapidly using air-lift from Korea to the area of conflict in the Asia region and their logistic capability will be moved by the Navy Amphibious Prepositioned Ships, which will stay near the Korean Peninsula. This concept which is mentioned above is just a conceptual idea but it is possible to be put into reality because most of these conditions are present or easily achieved in Korea.

Next, the ROK and U.S. Combined Marine Forces can play a role as a containing force against a rising China and other potential adversaries. As I mentioned above, the U.S. has contained China by using the U.S. and Japan alliance, and there are questions on whether it will be continued for much longer. The forces reduction in the Northeast Asian region as a result of the GPR (Global Defense Posture Review) is going to present potential problems primarily due to a force unbalance. According to the GPR, 1st and 2nd Brigades (7,000 troops) under the 2nd Army Infantry Division will be replaced by a Stryker Brigade (approximately 3,500 troops), 2nd Infantry Division's Artillery (2,000 troops), Aviations (2,000 troops), Engineers (2,000 troops) and 3 AH-64 Squadrons (72 AH-64s) will probably be redeployed of the Korean Peninsula. And one cannot eliminate consideration of the potential that 1 or 2 Air Force Fighter Squadrons will be pulled out to the Guam Air Force Base.¹⁶ This does not mean that the U.S. will weaken the stationed combat strength on the Korean Peninsula, but the shortage of troops could result in challenges, compared to the present force structure. This is the reason why the ROK and U.S. Combined Marine Forces have a strategic role in the future. For the future, we have to solve the

problem not based on the number of troops, but based on the capability for executing strategic deployment.

PREPARATION FOR THE FUTURE ERA

For the future military alliance between the ROK and U.S. Marine Corps, both Marine Corps must possess the ability to confront the fog of future threat. Actually the U.S. Marine Corps has already started to prepare for the 21st Century and possesses the capabilities to use against current threats. But the ROK Marine Corps is not prepared for the present and for the future even though they have made a plan for the 21st Century. So, we should know what the ROK Marine Corps needs to do to prepare for the future role of a ROK and U.S. Marine Corps Alliance.

ROK Marine Corps's Concept for the 21st Century

It is said that the ROK and U.S. Combined Marine Forces conducts their mission and roles through mutual dependence, but as it is the ROK Marine Corps almost relies upon the U.S. Marine Corps's support in the area of C4I and Combat Concepts. The ROK Marine Corps tried to improve their ability and current status to be able to mutually support the U.S. Marine Corps. These efforts will be addressed now, both conceptually and actually.

When we look to the concept of the ROK Marine Corps, it can be implied by "Multi-dimensional Maneuver Operations" as a Basic Combat Concept for the future ROK Marine Corps's "Marine Air and Ground Task Forces". This concept is offensive operation which is based on a multi-dimensional theater which is composed of ground, sea, air, space and information space (cyber space). In the multi-dimensional theater, the Marine Air and Ground Task Forces project their power rapidly and strike an enemy's center of gravity to spread their area of operations into the enemy's. Under these circumstances, the Marine Air and Ground Task

Forces destroy and paralyze an enemy's will and combat capability to end the war in a rapid maneuver.¹⁷

To support that concept which is presented above, the ROK Marine Corps has studied for a period of time and developed a new concept of force structure. According to the new concept of force structure the ROK Marine Corps is predicted to have many missions but the size of troops and units will be limited. So, they must develop "Air and Ground Task Forces" that are easily task organized at the time they are needed, according to the given mission. This ROK Marine Corps force structure concept is written on the official documents: 『'04-'20 Defense Basic Policy』 『'05-'19 Joint Military Strategy』 and 『Defense Reform 2020』¹⁸

Promote the Personnel Capability to higher level

It is natural that the most important factor for the future of an organization would be individual capability, and especially the capability of leaders, which is felt for a lifeline in the military. Every member of the ROK Marine Corps has proper individual capabilities to perform their duties, but these capabilities are not enough to confront future missions which are explained above. The ROK Marine Corps should find a way to enhance individual capabilities. It is not easy to enhance abilities while continuing to preserve the current educational system and individual management system. So, what is truly needed is new and innovative change from this point forward.

The education system for high rank officers should be changed immediately. Even though "Critical Thinking" is most important for the Commanders above the Battalion level, the ROK Marine Corps education system is almost solely focused on simple strategy and tactics. "Strategy and Tactics" are also needed as a fertilizer to have "Critical Thinking," but they do not have

chances to learn and practice it except during the opportunity for self-study. For that we should think about changing of ROK Naval War College curriculum and the establishment of the ROK Marine Corps Command Staff Course. For the Company Grade level officers, the contents of the Basic Course need to be considered for its objectives. Lieutenants have to learn for their billet as a platoon leader, so they must learn everything their marines do in the field. The curriculum of the ROK Marine Corps Basic School are more focused on academic education than field training, because of most of the ROK Marine Corps senior officers just want young lieutenants who are more knowledgeable.

Doctrine

Needless to say, the ROK Marine Corps has to develop their own doctrine which is centered on the Marine Air-Ground Task Forces. The ROK Marine Corps's future will be the Marine Air-Ground Task Forces, also our success and failure is dependent on whether we can perfect it or not. In all honestly, the ROK Marine Corps has very limited capability to make its own doctrine, due to manpower and budget constraints. The ROK Marine Corps always has a problem employing forces with approximately 27,000 troops. There are limited billets that allow officers to study and develop their own doctrines.

Taking the ROK Marine Corps' circumstances into consideration, I would like to suggest a ROK and U.S. Combined Marine Corps Doctrine Development Meeting. The U.S. Marine Corps should produce new and essential concepts for the ROK Marines, and ROK Marine Corps should accept these ideas and integrate these concepts into their unique circumstances. Also, members from both Marine Corps need to have meetings on a regular schedule, and irregularly, members can exchange their ideas with each other. For example, if the ROK side develops their new concept and asks for a review from the U.S. members, the U.S. members should respond with

their own ideas and recommendations about the ROK Marines' new doctrinal concepts. This should help the ROK Marines to produce their own doctrine with help from an expert on Expeditionary Operations and Air-Ground Maneuver.

The ROK Marine Corps must have a doctrine unique to their organization and structure. Until now, they just have followed doctrines of the ROK Army and U.S. forces. Like the U.S. Marines, the ROK Marine Corps is always threatened like a candle in front of heavy wind, so to survive among the struggles they have to be trained and equipped with their own individual service character. These unique characteristics of the ROK Marine Corps can make a more effective and combat capable ROK and U.S. Combined Marine Forces in the future.

Planning Capability

One retired ROK Army General who worked as deputy Chief of Staff of Combined Forces Command in Korea said, "*There are some limitations to make Operational Plans by the ROK Joint Chief of Staff independently, even though they prepare for every condition.*"¹⁹ That is true, and the ROK Marine Corps also has the exact same problems that he mentioned. A planning skill is not acquired in the short term, it is acquired by long years of experience and proper training and education.

The ROK side has our own planning process, but we do not have the manpower and capability to make OPLANs. Actually, so far we have followed the U.S. Marine Corps' doctrine and planning process. So, that is why the ROK Marine Corps thinks Combined Planning is a principle objective for future enhancement. First of all, the ROK Marine Corps must provide opportunities to conduct planning exercises and gain experience with the U.S. Marines. They have some experience in working with the U.S. Marines but they have not acquired the U.S. Marines' "Know-How" on the Planning Process. The ROK Marine Corps should send officers to

the U.S. Marine Corps schools to learn how to plan, and the U.S. Marines should open the door widely to the ROK Marine Corps. For example, the ROK Marine Corps has sent Major level officers to the U.S. Marine Corps Command & Staff College, but I think this is not enough to develop enough service proficiency in the U.S. Marine Corps Planning Process. The language skills of the ROK Marine Corps's officers will present a challenge, but it should be a good experience in itself for the ROK Marine Corps. The ROK Marine Corps must find a way to learn this process on the ground. The ROK Marine Corps should send or attach officers to U.S. Marine Corps Units, for example, at Battalion, Regiment and Division levels.

All assets and equipment are essential to promote the ROK Marines' capabilities for the execution of future roles and missions, but the Planning Capability cannot be placed at the second level of requirements. We should bear in mind that this Planning Capability can make our war fighting capability progress and enhance the effectiveness of the Combined Marine Forces.

Equipment

In the future, the ROK Marine Corps needs to upgrade equipment to conduct combined warfighting with the U.S. Marines. The ROK Marine Corps is presently well equipped, but they are far behind when compared with the ROK Army and the U.S. Marine Corps. The ROK Marine Corps is only equipped with the M47 / 88Tank, Mortar, 155mm Howitzer, KAAV and Personal rifle. The only new weapon is the K-9new self-propelled Howitzer, which is deployed in the Northeast Islands. They had difficulties when required to maneuver air assets, they had to be provided Helos and Airplanes by the sister services; the Army, Navy and Air force.²⁰

Regarding unit level amphibious operations capability, Korea has only battalion level landing operation capabilities. Because of this, the ROK Marine Corps is gearing up for brigade-level amphibious operations capability. The current battalion level landing operation capabilities will

be expanded to the brigade level by reinforcing surveillance and strike capabilities with UAVs, amphibious multiple rocket launchers, augmenting the next generation amphibious assault vehicles and amphibious helicopters.²¹

Among these reinforcements which are described above, UAVs for surveillance and amphibious helicopters for strike capabilities are the most necessary for the execution of the ROK Marine Corps future role. These two assets are being discussed and will be equipped to the ROK Marine Corps, but no clear timeframe has been established. The U.S. Marine Corps also had prepared for the future many years ago, and the U.S. Marine Corps further developed its capabilities to project forces on an operational/tactical level with the use of helicopters and the development of air mobile assault capability in response to changing roles and missions. From these lessons learned, the ROK Marine Corps should enlarge their capabilities for future role and missions by acquiring assault support and attack aviation assets.

CONCLUSION

"The ROK Marine Corps needs to be the Rosetta System; an enabler force, a force everyone can plug into."

*Commanding General of MARFOR-PAC,
Major General John Goodman*

The ROK and U.S. Combined Marine Forces should prepare together for future roles and missions. These next roles and missions will be performed in the long term due to the potential for rapid change in the security environment.

After 9/11, the global security environment changed significantly in the aspect of future conflict. The situation in Northeast Asia has considerable influence upon Global Security, and there are two different prospects that can be considered based upon the current situation. The most challenging and dangerous which can become a regional threat, is a nuclear issue. Another

issue which can make an affirmative prospect is signs of regional cooperation between three major countries in Northeast Asia: China, Japan and South Korea.

The ROK and U.S. alliance has changed in the area of military, economy and diplomacy in the recent years. But, even if there are some delicate frictions between the ROK and the U.S. today, the ROK and U.S. alliance is not easy to disregard its importance to both countries because of the geopolitical situations, containment of the rising China in the Northeast Asia region and uncertainty of the U.S.-Japan military alliance.

The ROK and U.S. military alliance can be refined in several ways. First, the responsibility of the Republic of Korea's defense will be moved to the Republic of Korea with the support of the U.S.. Second, the ROK and U.S. military alliance will be moved to the Northeast Asia regional security alliance after the threat posed by North Korea is eliminated.

Under the ROK and U.S. military alliances, the ROK and U.S. Marine Corps Combined Forces roles are important currently and will be in the future. In the future, the ROK and U.S. Combined Marine Forces should maintain the capabilities to support the peace around the Korean Peninsula and provide vanguard power to help the rapid commitment of the U.S. troops. And ROK and U.S. Marine Corps Combined forces have to be employed as a ready-force to confront any potential conflict in Northeast Asia. To support the role of a ready-force in Northeast Asia, the ROK and U.S. Combined Quick Reaction Unit is proposed as a model. And the ROK and U.S. Combined Marine Forces play a role as a containing force against a rising China and other regional threats that may arise.

In the preparations for the future era, first, the ROK Marine Corps needs to develop "Multi-dimensional Maneuver Operations" doctrine as a Basic Combat Concept for the future ROK Marine Corps's "Marine Air and Ground Task Forces". To support this concept the ROK Marine

Corps must conduct detailed analysis to determine the optimal force structure. Second, the ROK Marine Corps should find a way to enhance the individual capabilities for the future. The educational system for the high ranking officers and for the Company Grade level officers needs to be enhanced in the near future.

To develop the ROK Marine Corps's doctrine, which is centered on the Marine Air-Ground Task Forces, I suggest the ROK and U.S. Combined Marine Corps Doctrine Development Working Group and that the ROK Marine Corps must develop a doctrine that is service specific and unique. And the development of advanced planning ability is an essential requirement. In order to achieve this, the ROK Marine Corps should provide opportunities to conduct planning exercises to gain experience with the U.S. Marines. Second, the ROK Marine Corps should send additional officers to the U.S. Marine Corps Schools to learn the planning process, and U.S. Marines should open the door widely to the ROK Marine Corps. And third, the ROK Marine Corps must find a way to learn that planning process on the ground.

Turning to the aspect of equipment, UAVs for surveillance and helicopters for strike capabilities are the most essential for the ROK Marine Corps future missions and roles.

The Republic of Korea is cognizant of its accomplishments and eager to increase its role in regional and international stability.²² The ROK Marine Corps has to coordinate with the U.S. Marine Corps not only in the present, but also in the future. And also, the ROK Marine Corps needs to develop every aspect of its warfighting strength in order to complement the capabilities of the U.S. Marine Corps.

NOTES

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